

make the ultimate sacrifice in order to keep the flames of freedom and liberty burning brightly throughout the world. They selflessly dedicate their life to protecting freedom, ensuring liberty, and defending the principles of this country through great personal sacrifice. On behalf of a grateful Nation, we pay tribute to these brave men and women.

Today, as we recognize and commend the actions already taken, we also renew our commitment to ensuring the security of our homeland. We renew our commitment to destroying Al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations that threaten the free world. We do not know what the future holds, however we can say with certainty that because of the men and women we honor with this resolution, we will prevail.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman HUNTER for introducing this important resolution. Today, we recognize, support, and commend our brave service men and women for their dedication, for their sacrifice, and for their supreme love of country. We thank and honor those, including our allies, who serve on behalf of liberty and freedom, and remember those who have been wounded or died in the line of duty.

Our Nation has committed our military to defend the world from grave danger and to assure the security for all nations. These men and women have risen to the highest level and have succeeded in overthrowing the Taliban in Afghanistan and the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq. While they are working diligently to bring peace, stability and prosperity to the people of Afghanistan and Iraq, our men and women of our armed forces continue to face danger each and every day.

In the coming weeks and months, it will be critically important for our Nation to continue our support and pray for the safety of our troops. Their mission may not be completed for a long time, and it is important that we reiterate our strong support. At the same time, I would like to commend the military families, the employers and the communities around the United States for their sacrifices and patriotism.

Our focus must be on working with the world community to fight the war against terrorism, and to rebuild Afghanistan and Iraq following the military actions. As we move forward in Iraq, and in other crisis spots around the world, I am hopeful that the United States will continue to strengthen its unity with the international community and provide hope to those nations that have been trapped under dictatorial regimes.

Today, we stand firmly behind our armed forces and our allies. We thank the brave men and women who risk their lives to keep our Nation free and safe. We offer our respect, our utmost gratitude, and the promise that we shall not forget your bravery and your sacrifice. We are proud of you. May God bless you and keep you safe.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this resolution honoring our brave men and women of the Armed Services. Their duty and sacrifice in Iraq and Afghanistan are appreciated by all Americans.

New challenges facing our Nation demand increased vigilance on the part of our Armed Services. With these increased demands, the role of the National Guard and Reserve Forces is critical in providing the total force necessary to ensure our security. Over the past year, I have had the opportunity to meet

with many National Guard and Reserve members from western Wisconsin who have been called up for service Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom in Iraq.

Over 2,300 members of the Wisconsin Air and Army National Guard are serving on active duty. The people of western Wisconsin are proud of their service and the service of all the men and women of our Armed Forces during this important time in our Nation's history.

We still have much to do in terms of peacekeeping and rebuilding in Iraq and Afghanistan. In this effort, it is important that we engage our allies to share responsibility and pursue an effective, sustained commitment to peace and stability in the region. If we can do this right, we will not have to again, sometime down the road, send our military forces over to fight.

In addition, we recognize today all of the 'round-the-clock' work put in by the military personnel and DoD civilian employees at military mobilization platforms around our Nation. In western Wisconsin, I represent Fort McCoy, one of the Army Reserves' power projection platforms. Ft. McCoy has been continuously processing and training mobilized members of the National Guard and Reserve for the past six months. Their efforts have been key in getting our forces ready for combat.

It is also important that we recognize the support and sacrifice of the families and employers of our troops. They are the backbone of our fighting forces, and we appreciate their commitment during these challenging times.

The American people and the Congress of the United States stand behind our Armed Service Members and those that support them. As our military effort continues, I and other Members of Congress will continue to work to ensure that our service men and women have all the resources necessary to fulfil their mission.

My thoughts and prayers are with those serving our Country overseas, as well as their families. America is firmly behind our troops, and we're all hoping to see them home safe, secure and soon.

May God continue to bless the United States of America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BASS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 177, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

#### REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 2180

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 2180.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Tennessee?

There was no objection.

#### SENSE OF THE HOUSE COM- MENDING NATION'S BUSINESSES AND BUSINESS OWNERS FOR SUPPORT OF OUR TROOPS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 201) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that our Nation's businesses and business owners should be commended for their support of our troops and their families as they serve our country in many ways, especially in these days of increased engagement of our military in strategic locations around our Nation and around the world.

The Clerk read as follows:

#### H. RES. 201

Whereas over 216,931 members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces have been called to leave their families and their jobs, in service to this country and her citizens;

Whereas businesses of every size and scope have been impacted as their employees who are members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces have been called away from their employment in local business and industry;

Whereas businesses across the Nation have been exceptionally accommodating to the unique demands on the time, resources, and responsibilities of employee spouses and families of active duty military personnel who have been deployed for service; and

Whereas business owners have made sacrifices so that they might ensure observance of the letter and the spirit of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act in many ways including: restoring employment status after military service obligation has been fulfilled, providing continuation of health benefits to active duty employees and their dependents, and committing uninterrupted pension and retirement benefits: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

(1) the businesses that establish the backbone of our Nation in times of peace and rise to a greater standard of resolve in times of challenge do so by—

(A) carrying on the good work of commerce, industry, and innovation; and

(B) steadfastly supporting the members of our military and their families; and

(2) the business owners of our Nation deserve our commendation and sincere expression of gratitude.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS).

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Res. 201.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?